



February 17, 2006

[New Chairman for House Education & the Workforce Committee](#)

On Wednesday, February 15, House Republican members elected Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) to be the new Chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee. McKeon replaces John Boehner (R-OH), who was recently elected to the position of House Majority Leader.

Prior to being named Chairman, McKeon led the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness, and has stated that in his new leadership role, he will continue to focus on ensuring that *"the edge America brings to the table is innovation and adaptability. If we lose that then we will lose not only our standard of living, but our position of global leadership."*

McKeon based his chairmanship campaign on a pledge to address the "New Realities" of a global economy. Specifically, he said he plans to focus on programs that improve the quality of education, train the workforce to adapt to a high tech global economy and to implement regulations that are more streamlined and less costly. He hopes "to work with Members on both sides of the aisle to fashion legislation that will truly meet the needs of the 21st century economy."

[Department of Labor ETA Budget Proposes Block Grant](#)

The FY07 budget proposal seeks \$9.4 billion for the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. There are several substantial changes within this proposal that include block granting several programs under the Workforce Investment Act and Employment Services as well as continuing the President's high Growth Job Training Initiative. Below are some major highlights'.

- **Career Advancement Accounts (CAA); \$3.4 B** – This is a major new proposal designed to reform the current approach to workforce training (the Workforce Investment Act – WIA)). Under this new plan, funds previously appropriated to WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated

Worker, WIA Youth, and the Employment Service would be allocated to states in a single funding stream, or a block grant.

States would be required to spend 75% of their block grant allocation on CAA's while the other 25% could be used for state administration (3%) or for other employment services such as One-Stop Centers.

Under this proposal, the future of One-Stop Centers is uncertain as CAA's would be distributed through a new system of "Community Career Centers" which could include not only One-Stop Career Centers, but also community-based or faith-based organizations, public libraries, or on-line systems. This would significantly change not only the infrastructure of One-Stops, but also possibly cause them to receive a huge loss in funding.

CAA's are self-managed accounts that would allow individuals to use their account to pay for expenses directly related to education and training. Approximately 800,000 accounts worth \$3,000 would be available to workers each year.

- **High Growth Job Training Initiative (HGJT); \$150 M** – Initiated by President Bush in the Fall of 2003, the budget proposal continues to seek funding for this proposal. HGJT would continue to invest in national models of workforce solutions within 14 identified sectors including advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, homeland security, and healthcare.

Resources would be targeted to support private/public partnerships to ensure the development of workers' skills in occupations where industry has identified needs. Additionally, workers would be provided with resources to assist them in creating a path to career-enhancing opportunities in high-growth occupations.

- **Community-Based Job Training Grants; \$150 M** – These proposed grants focus on strengthening the role of community colleges in promoting and preparing the American workforce to its full potential. The grants would be used for increasing capacity of community colleges to provide training in local high growth, high demand industries.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Nichole Jackson, Director of Government Relations at NJackson@careertech.org.

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